

ADDENDUM TWO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

Date: March 25, 2019

To: All Bidders

From: Dianna Gilliland/Nancy Storant, Buyers
AS Materiel State Purchasing Bureau

RE: Addendum for Request for Proposal Number 6028 Z1 to be opened April 5, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. Central Time

Questions and Answers

Following are the questions submitted and answers provided for the above mentioned Request for Proposal. The questions and answers are to be considered as part of the Request for Proposal. It is the Bidder's responsibility to check the State Purchasing Bureau website for all addenda or amendments.

Question Number	RFP Section Reference	RFP Page Number	Question	State Response
1			Our creative agency is based in San Francisco. Is your agency preference for one based in Nebraska or will you also be considering agencies based outside the state?	NCB will be evaluating the proposal response received from the bidder. As long as the bidder has a good knowledge of Nebraska issues, audiences, messaging and is willing to meet in person throughout the year, an out of state bidder will be considered.
2			We downloaded the RFP attached from your government website - however, based on the far reaching scope of work (newsletter, media planning and buying, creative development, website and video production), can you kindly provide a steer, even if ballpark at this stage, on the potential spend so that we can tailor our proposal to meet your budgetary needs?	The NCB communications and advertising budget varies year to year as the board of directors approves the annual budget, so it is difficult to provide a specific figure. However, based on recent years, NCB budgets an estimated \$1.6 million to achieve its advertising, marketing and education goals. This does not include the advertising agency fees.

3	II. (Terms and Conditions introduction)	7	In reference to the statement "Bidders should complete Sections II through VI as part of their proposal": Sections V and VI are contained within other attachments (such as the Attachment A Technical Response). Should bidders still submit the full language from Sections V and VI with their bid?	Yes, along with a completed Attachment A, bidders should also complete Sections II – VII as part of their proposal.
4	VI. (Proposal Instructions introduction)	28	<p>This section requests that "Bidders should identify the subdivisions of "Project Description and Scope of Work" clearly in their proposals". Is this request satisfied by directly filling out the Attachment A Technical Response in its current format?</p> <p>Do you prefer that responses are filled out directly on the Attachment A PDF?</p>	<p>Yes, the bidder must complete Attachment A, Technical Response.</p> <p>Yes, the bidder must include their responses for Attachment A. Attachment A is also available on the web site as a Word document.</p>
5	VII.A.	31	This section requests a <i>total</i> fixed price. The Cost Proposal document only requests hourly rates. If a total fixed price is requested, are you able to provide more details on the scope regarding how many projects are estimated (For example, how many brochures are needed?)	A fixed hourly rate is required. Because of the fluidity of projects NCB completes from year to year, it's difficult to provide specific numbers on deliverables. Provide a hourly fixed rate for the positions needed to meet each requirement on the Cost Proposal.
6	III.F.	17	Will the contractor be allowed to use the work created as part of the contract in efforts to promote their business (ex. put it in their company's portfolio)	Yes, with written approval from NCB.

7	Section V - A	Page 24	Regarding achieving your goals, what current KPI's are in place?	NCB doesn't have any specific KPIs in place, but are currently working toward its organizational goals, which are found in the Nebraska Corn Board strategic plan: http://nebraskacorn.gov/strategic-plan/ .
8	Section V - A	Page 24	Can you further clarify your current audience segmentation, i.e., farmers, producers, etc., and can you share their order of priority, if order is applicable?	The mission of Nebraska Corn Board is to promote the value of corn by creating opportunities. Therefore, many of NCB's communication and advertising efforts are designed to help build a demand for corn, which then makes consumers and influencers (those individuals who are purchasing corn products, such as food, fiber and fuel) NCB's top priorities. Other key audiences are farmers and youth (equal priority).
9	Section V - A	Page 24	The description of target audiences in project overview mentions youth. What messaging have you targeted to youth in recent campaigns?	NCB wants youth to understand modern agriculture from an early age and have a positive opinion of American corn farmers, Therefore, NCB provides educational programming for youth of all ages. For example, for the pre-K, NCB provides interactive displays for local children's museums, for elementary students, NCB provides agricultural sack lunch experiences, science curriculum for high school students, etc. NCB also supports students who are passionate about agriculture through programs like FFA and 4-H.
10	Section V - A	Page 24	Can you summarize other influencers that you have targeted in the past?	In previous campaigns, NCB has targeted mechanics (ethanol-related), dieticians, bloggers, reporters, personal trainers, etc.
11	Section V - A	Page 24	How frequently do you survey your membership? Producers (that are not members)? Will these survey results be available during this bid RFP?	NCB does not have a membership list. NA NA
12	Section V - A	Page 24	What would your membership list as your greatest strength/benefit?	Refer to the answer for question #11.
13	Section V - A	Page 24	What are the top 3 challenges you hope to address with this RFP?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Securing a contractor to handle the CornsTalk publication. 2. Securing a contractor that works closely with the board to strategically promote corn demand growth among consumers. 3. Help the general public understand and have a positive feeling about American agriculture.

14	Section III - D	Page 16	What current marketing functionality exists in-house, e.g. copy, design, PR, content, other?	NCB has a full-time Director of Communication and a communication intern who handle a majority of the social media work on behalf of the organization. They manage smaller graphic design, digital and video and audio projects as necessary. The Director of Communication manages news releases and statements on behalf of the organization.
15	Section III - D	Page 16	How many vendors or service providers do you currently work with on marketing and communication projects? On digital, web or design projects? Other?	Approximately 25-30 vendors through a variety of different media platforms (web, print, broadcast, digital, transit, etc.).
16	Section V - D	Pages 24 - 26	Can you provide examples of past efforts coordinated with stakeholder groups, such as fuel retailers, NE Ethanol Board, NE Corn Growers Association?	NCB often coordinates with like-minded industry groups, such as the Nebraska Corn Growers Association and the Nebraska Ethanol Board. For example, NCB partners with the Nebraska Ethanol Board to sponsor a number of events (pump promotions, the Lincoln Marathon, Renewable Fuels Month, the Omaha Auto Show, etc.). NCB collaborates on messaging and contribute funds to the overall sponsorship costs. NCB also partners with the NeCGA through a variety of activities, including Husker Harvest Days, the Nebraska Corn joint newsletter, etc.
17	Section V - D	Pages 24 - 26	In regard to industry sponsorships and promotions, can you provide any examples? Do these align with events such as the NE State Fair, Husker Harvest Days, etc.?	NCB partners with fuel retailers, the Nebraska Ethanol Board, Nebraska Corn Growers Association and ethanol plants to host pump promotions in metro areas. These are designed to promote the benefits of clean-burning ethanol blends to motorists. There are prepromotion materials, media buys, shared staff and on-site promotional displays while at the event. NCB also partners with other Nebraska commodity groups for Husker Harvest Days to promote messaging to farmers. The focus has been on the importance of ag trade for the last couple of years. These are just a few examples, but there are many more.

18	Section V - D	Pages 24 - 26	Can we be provided any previous examples of ad executions not covered in the prior two questions?	<p>NCB's Big 10 Network campaign was a partnership between several corn producing states designed to promote the benefits of E15. This national campaign was initiated and developed by Nebraska Corn Board. The television commercial can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/KHr_1yrkPFA</p> <p>This national campaign on the Big 10 Network involved a collaboration (led by Nebraska) of several corn states. The collaboration of corn states promoted the fuel throughout college football, men's basketball and women's volleyball. The campaign was primarily a television campaign, but also included a digital component on the BTN2GO app. Example two: Transit advertising involved wrapping 11 delivery trucks in the Omaha and Lincoln areas to promote the usage of American Ethanol. Example three: Various magazine advertisements through the AAA magazine, CWS program book and various livestock publications.</p>
19	Section V - D	Pages 24 - 26	Also, regarding current available materials, would you provide A) current annual marketing communications plan; and B) available research applied to Nebraska Corn brand acceptance.	<p>Currently, NCB does not have an annual marketing communications plan.</p> <p>Information on NCB's strategic plan and brand awareness can be found here: http://nebraskacorn.gov/strategic-plan/</p>
20	Section V - D	Pages 24 - 26	Can you share temporary access to your Google Analytics or any other research conducted by NCB?	No. While NCB uses Google Analytics, NCB's new website launched the weekend of March 22, 2019. Therefore, analytics would not be an accurate measurement of the website.
21	Section V – D – 4	Page 25	<p>What are your expectations for your website?</p> <p>What do you want to accomplish by having it?</p>	<p>On NCB's website, resources are provided for students, teachers, consumers and farmers.</p> <p>The website serves as a resource for anyone wanting to learn more about Nebraska's corn industry. General facts are included about the industry as well as information about the different programs of the Nebraska Corn Board.</p>
22	Section V – D – 5	Page 25	You mention videos and TV commercials. How many do you anticipate producing annually?	Difficult to determine based on the fluidity of NCB's communication portfolio and budget approval by NCB's board of directors. An estimate would be two to three TV commercials and two to three online educational videos (two to three minutes in length).
23	Section V – D -2	Page 25	Do you prioritize specific markets or regions within the state for media placement?	NCB often targets high population areas when trying to reach consumers. A goal is to increase corn demand and urban areas provide options to reach more people more efficiently. Also, people living in cities are often removed from agriculture, which presents additional opportunities.

24	Section V – D - 2	Page 25	Can you confirm the seasonal media placement strategy for targeting farmers/producers vs. consumers?	NCB's primary audience consists of consumers. NCB targets them throughout the year, but there are certain times where ad placement is heavier. For example, during the month of May (Renewable Fuels Month), NCB will start a larger campaign promoting ethanol to kick off the summer driving season. NCB will also place television advertisements during winter months during key television programming (March madness).
25	Section IV	Pages 22 -23	Do you have any guidance regarding budget, ie, how is your budget invested among your top 3 target audiences, and what percentage of your annual budget has already been contracted/committed for the upcoming fiscal year?	<p>The bulk of NCB's communication budget goes towards promotion and education to consumer audiences.</p> <p>As a checkoff who receives ½ cent per every bushel of corn sold in the state, budgets can vary year-to-year. Therefore, there isn't a defined budget. Rather, a new budget must be approved by the Board each year.</p> <p>At this time, 0% of NCB's budget has been committed for the upcoming fiscal year. Those recommendations will be decided on and presented to the full board in June 2019 with the fiscal year beginning July 1.</p>
26			<p>What's the motivation behind the RFP process?</p> <p>Is it standard procedure every few years?</p> <p>Or are you seeking a change in direction?</p>	<p>It is a required process to meet Statutory obligations.</p> <p>See above</p> <p>See above</p>
27			What are you looking for in a new partner?	A contractor who has a knowledge of agricultural issues and can help us tell the story of the American farmer in strategic ways to help boost demand for Nebraska corn and corn products; along with reaching and communicating with consumers.
28			Similarly, what qualities do you believe create the foundation for a successful relationship with an agency?	A contractor that's flexible, responsive, creative, can be a self-starter who can work with little supervision/direction. A contractor that has a good knowledge/background of American agriculture.
29			<p>How do you like to work with your agencies in terms of communications and meetings?</p> <p>What is your preferred frequency of in-person meetings?</p>	<p>Once a month NCB would like an in-person check-in with NCB staff (likely the Communication Director and/or Executive Director). NCB also requires email and phone responses in a timely manner (reasonable 24 hour window).</p> <p>See response to first question</p>

30			<p>You state that out-of-state agencies can be considered. While (<i>company name</i>) is accustomed to working with clients in multiple markets across the U.S., does the review team see our Minneapolis location as a significant disadvantage or is it a neutral issue?</p>	<p>Please see response to Question #1</p>
31			<p>What are the most pressing challenges confronting the Board currently and what are the anticipated challenges the Board is expected to address over the next few years?</p>	<p>Issues impacting demand are related to ethanol, international ag trade and consumer demand. Many things are limiting ethanol growth right now, from policy issues, to misinformation spread by the oil industry regarding ethanol myths. International trade is also important, as it's important to have strong export markets. Additionally, consumers continue to be misled when making food purchases with misleading labels such as "GMO-free, all natural, organic," etc.</p>
32			<p>What are your organizational goals and objectives for 2019-2020?</p> <p>What are your communications goals and objectives for this same timeframe?</p>	<p>NCB will continue to move forward to achieve its strategic plan, which was ratified in 2017. The plan can be found here: http://nebraskacorn.gov/strategic-plan/</p> <p>NCB's communication goals are to support its mission to promote the value of corn by creating opportunities. NCB will be focusing on ethanol, new and current uses of corn, and overall demand growth.</p>
33			<p>Who are your primary target audiences, and how would you prioritize them?</p> <p>Are there different objectives you hope to achieve for each audience/stakeholder group?</p>	<p>Please see response to question #8.</p> <p>NCB's goal is to maximize corn demand, so consumers and influencers are large audiences they try to reach. NCB also targets motorists to encourage them to use more ethanol.</p> <p>Outside of working to build demand, NCB targets youth to help improve their agricultural literacy and prepare them for future ag-related careers. NCB also targets farmers to provide them with information to help them farm more efficiently and sustainably.</p>
34			<p>What is the expected budget for fees and expenses?</p> <p>The RFP acknowledges "budget notes below" but we had a difficult time locating this information.</p>	<p>Please see response to Questions #25.</p>

35			<p>Does the Nebraska Corn Board have recent research of consumers/corn farmers that can help guide development of the strategy?</p> <p>If not, would the Board find that of value to the RFP response?</p>	<p>NCB utilizes research from various partner organizations to better understand the makeup of their audiences. For example, NCB uses the research from the National Corn Growers Association, Osborne Barr, U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance, AFAN and others to understand the audience habits of consumers, influencers, motorists, farmers and youth.</p>
36			<p>Is there alignment among the Board's Directors and members about the direction of NE corn or will the selected agency need to devote some time to create alignment in order to move ahead with a new program?</p>	<p>Communication decisions are determined by the Nebraska Corn communication committee, which is coordinated through NCB's Director of Communications. The committee utilizes Nebraska Corn's strategic plan in determining appropriate communication projects to fund, and is always open to new ideas and suggestions.</p>
37	V	25	<p>Will current and past creative work samples be made available for review during this RFP process?</p>	<p>For available examples of our previous work, refer to NCB's website (CornsTalk publications) and social media channels (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).</p>
38	VII	31	<p>Is there a defined budget for the initial year for agency services, media, public relations and production?</p>	<p>Please see response to Question #25.</p>
39	NA	NA	<p>We see ourselves as an extension of our clients' marketing departments; what types of intangibles do you look for in an agency partnership?</p>	<p>A contractor that has a solid understanding of modern agricultural production and the challenges that face the industry.</p>
40	NA	NA	<p>What is the largest challenge you are facing today regarding your marketing efforts?</p>	<p>The majority of the U.S. population is growing up in urban areas and are unfamiliar with modern agricultural production. Additionally, there are many myths and incorrect marketing information shared, which has led to distrust of American agriculture. NCB is working to correct the misinformation.</p>
41	NA	NA	<p>What do you see as most successful/least successful initiatives in your current creative and marketing plan?</p>	<p>NCB has a strong campaign with the Big 10 Network we would like to continue to improve.</p>

42	V. Project Description and Scope of Work – A. Project Overview	Page 24	Of your stated prospective target audiences (farmers, influencers, millennials, youth, vehicle owners and media), could you rank them in order of priority?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Consumers: Influencers, Vehicle Owners, Millennials 2) Farmers and Youth (equal priority) 3) Media
43	NA	NA	What is the impetus behind this review?	Please see response to question #26
44	NA	NA	In the last five years, have you had any relationships with an agency? If so, which one?	David and Associated, contract #66991 O4, located on Nebraska State Purchasing Bureau's website.
45	V. A. Project Overview	24	Can you please elaborate on your target audiences and explain the focus on youth? Are we only targeting Nebraska residents or other territories?	<p>NCB has a variety of audiences they serve. The largest audience they try to reach is the consumer who may consume our products (food, fuel, fiber). By convincing consumers to use corn products, NCB is directly achieving its primary goal of increasing corn demand.</p> <p>NCB reaches farmers by providing them with information they can use to be successful. For example, NCB invests in agricultural research to ensure farmers have the best information and technology to produce corn as efficiently and sustainably as possible.</p> <p>NCB focuses on youth for a couple of reasons. They want students to be smart consumers in the future and better understand agriculture and where their food comes from. Secondly, NCB wants to support those students who are interested in agriculture-related fields to ensure we have a vibrant future industry.</p> <p>NCB targets in-state and out-of-state audiences.</p>
46	V. A. Project Overview	24	What specific actions do we want the target audiences to take?	NCB has several different audiences they reach through various campaigns. Ultimately, they're working toward their goal to increase corn demand. So they want their audience to use more ethanol, consume more corn and corn-derived products (like beef, pork and poultry), and use more corn-based products.

47	V. C. Project Requirements	24	Can you provide more information on the NCB's budget process? Will you commit to paying for any approved and completed work by the agency?	Please see response to Question #25 Please refer to Section IV.E of the RFP.
48	V. D. Scope of Work	24-25	Does the CornsTalk newsletter need to be sourced completely from the agency or are there other content providers?	NCB relies on the contractor to work with Nebraska Corn Board staff to identify potential topics and interviewees to develop each edition of CornsTalk. Requirements are for a contractor to research, author and design each issue of CornsTalk.
49	V. D. Scope of Work	24-25	Do you have any performance metrics you can share regarding the CornsTalk distribution as it relates to how it impacts awareness, preference and corn sales?	The CornsTalk is included in every Nebraska newspaper three times a year. While no formal measuring process exists to determine performance, the publication typically receives very positive feedback from the urban audiences removed from agriculture.
50	V. D. Scope of Work	25	Can you provide the trade shows you typically attend and/or sponsor?	NCB partners with other Nebraska commodities and exhibit at Husker Harvest Days each year. They have also invested in the Nebraska State Fair's Raising Nebraska, which is a coalition of ag industry, state agencies and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln designed to improve upon the agricultural literacy of attendees.
51	V. D. Scope of Work	25	What content management platform is the website built on? Who is the hosting provider?	The website is developed in WordPress. Currently, NCB's domain is purchased through GoDaddy. The awarded contractor must be able to work with whatever hosting provider that NCB may use.
52	V. D. Scope of Work	25	How often is the content on the website updated?	Most of the information is fairly static. However, there will be regular updates with news releases, internship updates, calendar notifications, etc.
53	V. D. Scope of Work	25	Can you share examples of past advertising campaigns and what channels they were executed in?	Please see response to Question #18.

54	V. D. Scope of Work	25	Do you currently work with any social media influencers? If yes, who?	Through NCB's CommonGround campaign (which focuses on a mom-to-mom approach in helping consumers understand where their foods come from), NCB sometimes partners with food bloggers, nutritionists and RDs to help share messaging. NCB also partners with the Omaha Mom's Blog to promote American Ethanol: https://omaha.citymomsblog.com/mom/ethanol-greener-way-drive/
55	V. D. Scope of Work	25	What is the current distribution plan for your videos beyond your owned channels (website and social)?	This depends on the scope of video. NCB has several educational videos that are online-only videos (through the website and social media channels). There are other video commercials NCB produces that do air on local and national television, as well as through video streaming services across the country.
56	Other		What type of new partnerships are you looking to create regarding the promotion of corn uses?	Increased ethanol usage results in greater corn demand. Therefore, many of NCB's communication efforts focus on promoting ethanol to consumers, mechanics and the auto industry. Additional partnerships on this front are always welcome. Also, as there are more requests for environmentally-friendly products, there is a lot of potential for corn products like bio-based plastics.
57	Other		What does membership in the NeCGA include?	This RFP request is specifically for advertising work for the Nebraska Corn Board and not the Nebraska Corn Growers Association (NeCGA). The Nebraska Corn Board does not have members but works on the behalf of all corn producers through their checkoff investment.
58	Other		Have you started the brand strategy engagement referenced in strategic focus area 5? The timeline provided in the Strategic Plan indicated this might have already been complete. If it is complete, can you share the output to guide our technical approach?	Due to State of Nebraska statute, the Nebraska Corn Board is its own state agency and continues to have its separate identity from the Nebraska Corn Growers Association. However, to the general public, who doesn't understand the differences between the two organizations, NCB partners and brands themselves under the "Nebraska Corn" brand in collaborative efforts for simplicity and to strengthen both of the organizations. Nebraska Corn has three marks/logos that are consistent in look (Nebraska Corn Board, Nebraska Corn Growers Association, and the collective Nebraska Corn).

59	Other		Do you have alliances with other state corn associations to create a national movement or campaign that supports the use of corn? Similar to 'got milk.'	There are several national campaigns/outreach efforts with other corn states. Most of those campaigns are coordinated through the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA). The contractor selected through this RFP process will not be responsible for NCGA campaigns. However, there are other national campaigns outside of NCGA where corn states will partner. For example, NCB's current national campaign promoting ethanol through the Big 10 Network is a partnership between several corn states and organized and implemented through the Nebraska Corn Board.
60	Other		How many agencies are being invited to respond to the RFP?	The RFP is available to all bidders.
61			Our company will be turning 5 in May. Because we will not be 5 years old at the time the RFO is due, does that disqualify us from consideration?	If you will be five (5) years as of the start of our new fiscal year (2019 through 2020) and are eligible for consideration.

This addendum will become part of the proposal and should be acknowledged with the Request for Proposal response.